

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR NORTHWEST WISCONSIN COUNTIES

OCTOBER 2001



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Unemployment Rates Lowest in Northwest Region in Two Years

### At a glance...

Unemployment rates in each of the ten counties of Northwest Wisconsin were lower in September than in the previous month, and were lower than one year earlier in nine of the ten counties. It follows, then, that the regional unemployment rate declined in September to 3.1 percent from 4.2 percent in August.

The September rate is the lowest reported in the region since October 1999. Labor force estimates, released by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, also showed a drop in the state unemployment rate from 4.0 percent in August to 3.4 percent in September, not seasonally adjusted. The Wisconsin seasonally adjusted rate declined from 4.3 to 4.0 percent.

The Northwest regional unemployment rate has declined from August to September in 18 of the last 20 years. It declines at the end of summer as jobseekers leave the labor market and laid off school workers are recalled by their employers. As a result, the number of unemployed residents in Northwest Wisconsin in September was 2,900, nearly 1,000 less than in August. This exodus is larger than normal but does not reflect any reactions to the terrorist attacks. The September estimates reflect activity during the survey week of September 9-15, too early for any impact to be felt in the northwest region.

The lower unemployment rate in September, however, does not mean that more residents were employed. There were 89,200 residents employed in September, 1,000 less than in August. A reduction in the number of employed is typical for the month and reflects a seasonal pattern that began in August. Even though the number of residents employed declined the number of jobs with area employers increased. This occurs as school employees return to work, increasing the number of jobs, and summer workers leave the area to return to school, reducing the number of employed. Often, individuals work more than one job (but are only counted once) to help local employers make it to the end of the summer tourism season.

A loss of both employed and unemployed occurred in

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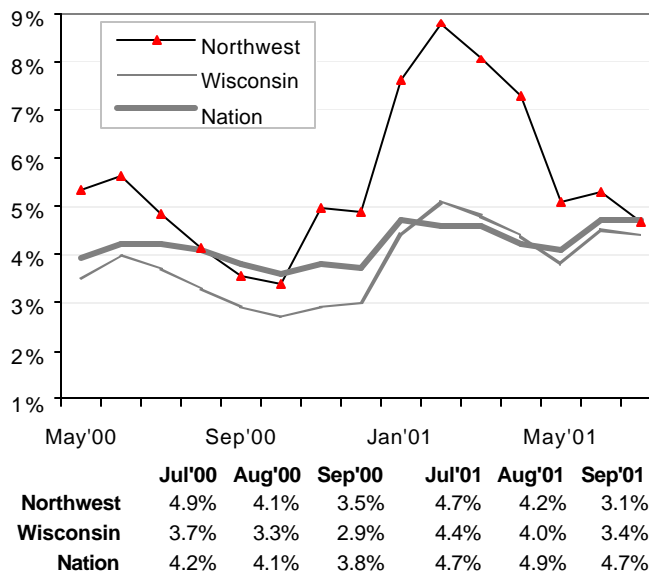
Historic and current labor force and year-to-date wage and salary employment estimates are posted at [www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi](http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi)

every county of the region and all counties reported a reduction in unemployment rate. Four northwest counties reported an unemployment rate of 3.0 percent or less: Bayfield, Douglas, Sawyer and Taylor; and were among 33 other counties in the state with rates that low.

### A closer look...

The number of jobs in the northwest region increased in September primarily from an increase in government employment. The number of government jobs increased by nearly 2,000 as area schools resumed classes. Nearly half of that increase occurred in Douglas County where, in addition to elementary and secondary schools, both the University of Wisconsin and WITC have campuses. The increase in jobs includes not only workers on the regular payrolls at these institutions but also the large number of work-study jobs filled by students. The second largest increase in industry jobs occurred in transportation where contractors hire drivers to bus students to school. The end of the primary tourist season also ended many jobs with retail and service establishments. Retail trade jobs declined by 400 and services industry jobs dropped by 500. Manufacturing and construction firms also reported fewer jobs in September. Manufacturing reductions reflect the weakness in the industrial equipment sector in the nation and state. Prior to September 11, there was optimism that production lay offs had

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



peaked. However, following the attacks that optimism eroded as confidence to spend money on large purchases faded. This effect may be felt more immediately by retailers, but effect also manufacturers.

As a result of workers returning to schools, claims for unemployment benefits declined from August to September in Northwest Wisconsin. And, contrary to statewide experience, claims continued to decline since the week of Septem-

ber 11. During that week residents of Northwest Wisconsin filed 1,484 claims for unemployment benefits. That dropped to 1,316 claims for the last week in September, then increased to 1,460 claims in the second week of October. Statewide, the number of claims increased from 8,530 for the week including September 11 to 12,122 four weeks later.

September Data	Wisconsin	Ashland	Bayfield	Burnett	Douglas	Iron	Price	Rusk	Sawyer	Taylor	Washburn
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	3,038,900	7,800	7,400	7,400	22,700	3,400	6,700	7,300	9,900	11,000	8,500
Employed	2,935,900	7,500	7,200	7,100	22,200	3,200	6,400	7,000	9,600	10,700	8,200
Unemployed	103,000	300	200	300	600	100	300	300	300	300	300
Unemployment rate(%)	3.4%	4.0%	3.0%	3.9%	2.6%	3.7%	3.8%	3.9%	2.8%	2.4%	3.4%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,857,050	8,700	4,130	4,870	18,830	2,480	6,300	6,150	7,030	9,330	6,580
Construction & Mining	137,670	400	280	320	1,210	380	320	280	350	520	290
Manufacturing	591,290	1,610	250	1,010	1,240	480	2,180	2,460	770	3,440	1,240
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	137,860	220	260	140	2,350	60	130	250	180	450	280
Wholesale Trade	137,550	180	60	50	1,170	80	230	120	130	450	130
Retail Trade	502,210	1,750	870	1,020	3,750	600	1,010	830	1,800	1,570	1,510
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	152,490	280	160	140	490	30	210	130	300	350	230
Services	793,140	2,470	870	760	5,320	400	1,200	760	1,590	1,490	1,430
Government	404,840	1,790	1,390	1,450	3,300	460	1,020	1,330	1,930	1,070	1,450
<b>Change from previous month</b>											
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-42,500	-300	-200	-200	-500	0	-200	-200	0	-300	-200
Employed	-23,700	-200	-200	-200	-100	0	-200	-100	100	-300	-100
Unemployed	-18,800	-100	-100	-100	-300	0	-100	-100	0	0	-100
Unemployment rate(%)	-0.6%	-1.4%	-0.6%	-0.7%	-1.2%	-0.7%	-1.8%	-1.4%	-0.7%	-0.6%	-0.8%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	3,280	-10	-110	-60	860	40	-60	20	150	-50	-10
Construction & Mining	-2,590	-20	0	-10	30	-20	-10	-10	-20	-10	-20
Manufacturing	-6,120	-40	-10	-10	-20	0	-10	-40	-10	-90	-40
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	3,380	60	-10	0	-50	20	0	0	40	10	40
Wholesale Trade	-1,840	-10	0	0	30	0	0	-10	0	0	0
Retail Trade	-4,660	-60	-60	-50	30	-20	-40	0	-140	-10	-70
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	-1,000	0	-10	0	0	0	0	0	-10	0	0
Services	-7,690	0	-130	-30	-70	-20	-30	20	-100	0	-150
Government	23,810	70	100	50	920	80	40	60	380	50	220
<b>Change from one year ago</b>											
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	87,300	-100	0	100	100	200	100	300	400	400	400
Employed	71,100	0	100	0	300	100	100	300	400	300	400
Unemployed	16,200	-100	-100	100	-100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unemployment rate(%)	0.4%	-1.3%	-0.6%	1.4%	-0.5%	-0.2%	-0.6%	-0.5%	-0.7%	-0.2%	-0.5%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	1,060	-240	150	-80	630	70	-70	80	230	40	230
Construction & Mining	-1,400	-80	10	30	50	20	60	20	0	-20	20
Manufacturing	-27,070	-30	20	-50	-80	10	-140	30	-40	-30	-10
Transportation & Pbl.Util.	1,840	10	-10	0	210	0	0	0	20	30	-10
Wholesale Trade	-2,020	0	-10	-10	90	10	20	0	-10	0	0
Retail Trade	1,530	20	20	50	50	10	10	10	50	20	30
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	3,250	10	10	40	-10	0	0	0	10	10	0
Services	16,380	50	0	-120	390	-30	10	-50	90	40	50
Government	8,550	-220	110	-10	-70	50	-40	70	110	-10	140

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

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